

Pázmány, a jezsuita érsek: Kinevezésének története, 1615–1616.

Mikropolitikai tanulmány [Pázmány, the Jesuit prelate: His appointment as Primate of Hungary, 1615–1616. A micro-political study]. By Péter Tusor. (Collectanea Vaticana Hungariae. Classis I, 13) Budapest–Rome: MTA–PPKE Lendület Egyháztörténeti Kutatócsoport, 2016. 459 pp.

The aim of this monograph is to explore the historical background of Péter Pázmány's (1570–1637) appointment as Primate of Hungary. Focusing on one of the most influential figures of Early Modern Hungarian Catholicism, this micro-political study is based on an exceptionally wide range of primary sources. One of its key features and unquestionable merits is its methodological awareness, reflected not only in the structure of the work but also in the narration and the critical analysis and interpretation of the relevant historical sources. This approach is consistently applied throughout the work. The monograph carefully investigates the motives for and circumstances of Pázmány's appointment as Primate of Hungary. Its greatest addition to the existing scholarship is the in-depth examination and detailed exploration of Pázmány's career, culminating in his appointment as Archbishop of Esztergom. Tusor's work also brings into focus why the Hungarian Jesuit had no choice but to quit the Society of Jesus and temporarily join another religious order.

The monograph addresses a subject that has been of outstanding importance and has long been discussed in Hungarian historiography. Furthermore, it corresponds to a state-of-the-art trend in international historiography as well. Although a great deal has already been written on the pontificate of Pope Paul (Borghese) V (1605–21), with particular emphasis on the diplomacy and the decision-making processes of the Holy See, it was German historian Wolfgang Reinhard who first adopted a micro-political approach to the history of the papal diplomacy. Thus, Reinhard proved the forerunner of a new school of historiography, and Tusor's monograph on Pázmány's appointment complements it nicely.

In addition to micro-political studies, it has now become increasingly popular in international historical research to unearth and publish diplomatic instructions written to the papal nuncios, who represented the Holy See in various European courts. Publications by Klaus Jaitner and Silvano Giordano offer examples of this trend. Moreover, the relevant contemporary historical research has also tended to examine seventeenth-century diplomatic relations, with

a particular focus on relations between the Habsburg dynasty and the Holy See. (The latest volumes of the series *Nuntiaturberichte aus Deutschland nebst ergänzenden Aktenstücken* and the conference “Der Papst und der Krieg. Kuriale Diplomatie am Kaiserhof 1628–1635. Die jüngsten Publikationen der 4. Abteilung der Nuntiaturberichte aus Deutschland: Eine Bilanz (Il papa e la guerra Diplomazia curiale alla corte imperiale 1628–1635. Le pubblicazioni recenti della 4° sezione delle “Nuntiaturberichte aus Deutschland”: Un bilancio)” organized by the DHI in Rome in December 2016 can be referred to as examples.)

Although the monograph is primarily concerned with the historical background of the appointment of Hungarian Jesuit Péter Pázmány as Archbishop of Esztergom, the scope of the research on which it is based was not limited to this specific event. In fact, the work offers insights into various aspects of Pázmány’s appointment, and is intended for a diverse range of scholars who are curious about the history of the seventeenth century in general. For instance, in addition to tackling issues related to secular and canon law, Tusor also investigates the historical figures who masterminded diplomatic relations between the Habsburg Court and the Holy See in the aforementioned period. A precise review and critical analysis of the relevant primary and secondary sources enables him to present well-known historical facts and events from a new angle and to turn the spotlight on some lesser-known participants in seventeenth-century Habsburg and Vatican diplomacy, such as Cardinal Melchior Klesl, Chargé d’affaires Lodovico Ridolfi, Papal Nuncio Placido De Mara, etc.

With regards to the reasons for Pázmány’s appointment as Archbishop of Esztergom, Tusor has taken account of a wide range of political issues on the basis of seventeenth-century Habsburg and Vatican diplomatic sources. For example, he highlights the importance of the War of Gradisca between the Habsburg Empire and Venice (1615–17), an event that eventually resulted in the emergence of shared interests between the Habsburgs and the Vatican. While at first sight there appears to be no immediate connection between Pázmány’s appointment and this local conflict, the plans of Rome and Prague concerning the war indicate mutual interests that were deeper than either before or after the war. Pope Paul (Borghese) V almost launched a war against Venice in order to teach the Republic a lesson, and Habsburg diplomacy also made efforts to encourage the Papal State to enter into the struggle by providing either financial aid or direct military support. Politically, the Papacy focused increasingly on Italy in this period, and, for geopolitical reasons, the emperor was its most important partner in foreign affairs.

In his monograph, Tusor also sheds light on the relevance of the complications that surrounded the succession to the Habsburg throne, one of the most important issues of contemporary European power politics. As he points out, historical sources appear to confirm that Pázmány was deeply involved in the courtly power struggles induced by the issue of succession. Cardinal and Imperial Chief Minister Klesl was one of Pázmány's strongest supporters, and he could reasonably suppose that, with Pázmány's appointment, he would ensure the absolute loyalty of the new archbishop, one of the prominent leaders of Royal Hungary.

Although Pázmány's appointment as Primate of Hungary was supported by all key elements, i.e. the prominent figures in Papal and Habsburg diplomacy and the Hungarian Catholic and secular elites, several challenges arose and had to be faced. Clearly, the problem was not simply that the additional fourth vow of obedience to the Pope, which all members of the Society of Jesus were supposed to pronounce, at that time included a prohibition against occupying the position of a prelate. Difficulties also emerged due to the fact that, as a Jesuit, if appointed Archbishop of Esztergom, Pázmány would come into possession of the most important benefice of the Catholic Church in Hungary and thus would violate Act No. 8 of 1608, passed by the Diet of Hungary, which prohibited Jesuits from owning or possessing any kind of landed property in Hungary. As a consequence, Pázmány's appointment would have proved unlawful and void. In order to circumvent the aforementioned legal difficulties and become eligible to occupy the position of Prelate of Hungary, Pázmány had no alternative but to leave the Society of Jesus, and he temporarily joined the Order of the Somascan Fathers. Tusor shows that, contrary to the assumptions found in the early secondary literature, this step was made out of necessity, and not owing to the resistance of the Society of Jesus. Pázmány opted for the Somascan Fathers because he was supported by the Papal Nuncio to Prague, Placido de Mara, who had just established a Somascan college in the town of Melfi in southern Italy, where he had his episcopal See at the time. A religious order with a remote house under the supervision of the Nuncio could make Pázmány's preparatory period as a novice officially lawful but practically symbolic. Eventually, Pázmány did not complete his novitiate, because he spent only half a year as a novice of the Somascan Order before being appointed Archbishop of Esztergom. His appointment, however, which occurred on 28 September 1616, can be regarded as completely lawful according to canon law.

Tusor's research reinforces a central concept of micro-political research into the history of the Early Modern period, namely, that the main motive for political

nominations was to ensure absolute loyalty. Therefore, the prevailing patron-client system, which served as one of the foundations of European societies, needs to be taken into consideration when interpreting political nominations. Tusor's research suggests that Pázmány managed to occupy the position of Archbishop of Esztergom thanks at least in large part to the assistance of Imperial Chief Minister Klesl, who had a decisive influence on imperial decision-making at the time.

On the other hand, Tusor argues that Pázmány enjoyed the absolute confidence of the Pope as well, and this fact played an equally pivotal role in his appointment. There is evidence to suggest that the reason for the Pope's favorable opinion of Pázmány was the strong impression that the Hungarian Jesuit made on him during an audience on 5 January 1615. On this occasion, Pázmány gave a precise description of the religious and political situation in the Kingdom of Hungary at the time and called the Pope's attention to the importance of ensuring the succession to the Hungarian, Bohemian, and Holy Roman Imperial thrones. Tusor points out that, in the Roman Curia, Pázmány was regarded as a personality on whom Vatican diplomacy could rely to ensure a favorable outcome of the succession to the Habsburg throne, an issue that was referred to as "the most important issue for the entire Christianity" by Scipione Borghese, cardinal-nephew who controlled the papal Secretariat of State.

Another factor that needs to be taken into account is Pázmány's unshakeable loyalty to the Habsburg dynasty, which he considered the only conceivable protector of both his faith and his country. In light of all this evidence, it is of particular historical importance that the newly appointed archbishop succeeded in convincing the Protestant majority of the Hungarian diet to elect a Catholic Archduke from Graz, Ferdinand II, as king of Hungary in 1618. Pázmány also managed to arrange the succession of the Habsburg dynasty to the Hungarian throne without coming into serious conflicts with his patron, Klesl, who had been pulling strings for him to facilitate his career advancement.

The monograph also revisits several topics that are more loosely related to its main focus. For example, Tusor provides an overview of the Hungarian Catholic noblemen who furthered Pázmány's appointment as Archbishop of Esztergom, and he also sheds light on how Pázmány's ambition to found a university in Hungary fulfilled the expectations of the contemporary Catholic intelligentsia. Importantly, Tusor reexamines Pázmány's relationship with his predecessor, Archbishop Ferenc Forgách. Although historians had already taken notice of Pázmány's decisive influence on his predecessor, it was Tusor who first managed

to find sound evidence proving that Pázmány served as Forgách's confessor. Namely, he revealed a source in which Ridolfi, the Imperial Chargé d'affaires to Rome, alludes to Pázmány's important role as a confessor and policy-maker. In this position, Pázmány could indeed have exerted a considerable influence on his predecessor's "governance and methods" (p.31).

In conclusion, with this monograph Tusor, who has distinguished himself for his broad-based and penetrating research on church history, has made an outstanding contribution to historiography on the Early Modern era in Hungary.

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